

FACES OF APPALACHIA: ARAB & MUSLIM AMERICANS CONTRIBUTION TO THE WELFARE OF THE REGION: PART ONE, THE DISCOVERY STAGE

39th Annual Appalachian Studies
Conference
Shepherd University, Shepherdstown WV
March 18-21, 2016

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LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to the following:

1. A quick review of published articles in selected WV newspapers and magazines (e.g.: Herald Dispatch, Charleston Gazette, Goldenseal, Huntington Quarterly)
2. Some Google search
3. Southern WV areas (mainly Huntington, Charleston, Beckley, Bluefield, and Logan) with focus on Huntington and Charleston at this stage of data gathering
4. Published literature during the past 25 years (1990-2015)
5. This is work in progress. First stage of this research is titled "The Discovery Stage"

DEFINITIONS

Arab Americans: Americans who trace their origin to one of member countries of the League of Arab Nation (24 countries) stretching over 4000 miles from Morocco to the Persian Gulf. This category includes all religions; primarily Muslims and Christians

<http://www.arableagueonline.org/>

Muslim Americans: Americans who choose to practice the Islamic faith. This category includes Arab and non-Arab Muslims citizens.

Arab American Muslims are those who trace their ancestors or origin to a member country of the League of Arab Nations such as Syria, Egypt, Jordan, etc.

Non-Arab Muslim Americans are those who trace their ancestors or country of origin to nation state with a majority or large number of Muslim population such as Turkey, Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Albania, Nigeria, Iran, Indonesia, Somalia, etc.

BRIEF HISTORY

- Documentary and archeological evidence indicate that Arabs and Muslims may have arrived in America many centuries ago (Orfalea, 1988; Boland, 1961)
- First wave of immigrants-pre-colonial period up to 1850
 - Arab/Muslims sailors were among Columbus crew (Orfalea, 1988)
 - Arabic speaking slaves arrived in the US as early as 1717 (Mehdi, 1978)
- Second Wave of Immigrants 1850-1945
 - Characterized of adoption of Anglo-Saxon names e.g. Hatab:Wood; Najar: Carpenter; Abyad: White (Shuraydi, 1981)
- Third Wave of Immigrants 1945-Present
 - Professionals, students, & highly educated
 - Started of the establishment of community centers and places of worship

CONTRIBUTIONS

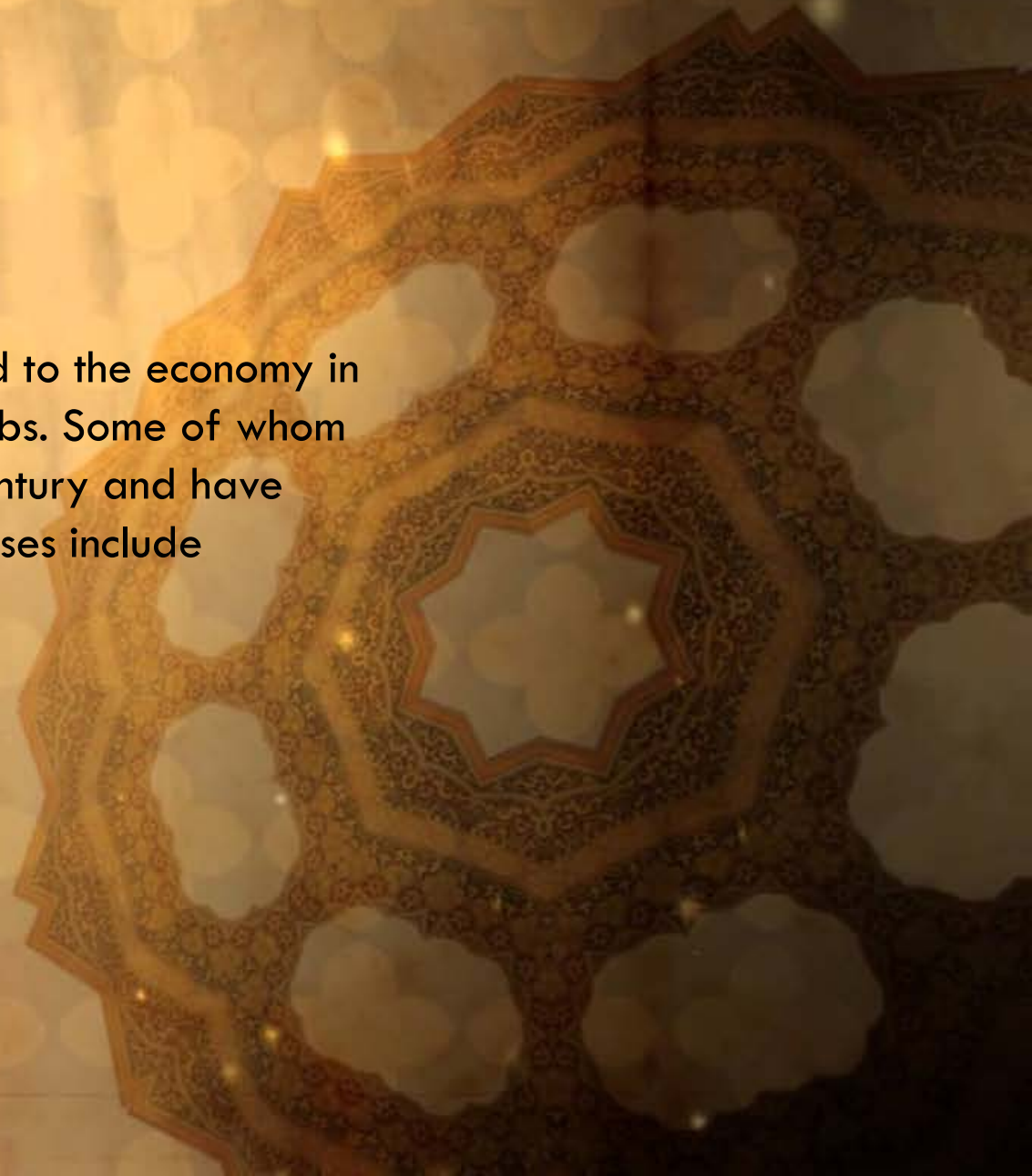
Wide spectrum includes

- Business
- Entrepreneurs
- Education
- Health
- Public Services
- National Guard and Military
- Social & Cultural Enrichment
- Social Media



CONTRIBUTIONS-BUSINESSES

American immigrants with Arab origins have contributed to the economy in the Tristate area by opening businesses and creating jobs. Some of whom have settled here in the late 19th century- early 20th century and have established businesses for many decades. These businesses include restaurants, spas, and grocery stores.



HUSSON'S PIZZA

Nicholas Husson- Co-founder of Husson's Pizza

Husson is an Arab American from St. Albans, WV with Lebanese origins.

Founded in 1977, Husson's Pizza currently has 10 locations all over WV.

Husson's pizza dough made with Lebanese bread recipe and the sauce was created by the elder Husson's wife. (Smith, 2010)



JIM'S STEAK AND SPAGHETTI HOUSE

Family owned and operated since 1940s

The Kennedy Dairy Store (1940)
expanded into The Spaghetti House
(1944) which was expanded again in
1962 and renamed Jim's Steak and
Spaghetti House.

Strawberry Pie week; over thirty years
tradition

Renowned Presidential booth

(Roberts, 2015)



PACK PEDDLER AND LATER SUCCESSFUL STORE OWNER

Thomas Michael- landed in America in 1900 and moved immediately to WV from Lebanon as Thomas Sheehan son of Michael

Began as a trader, purchased trade goods and sold them through Harrison, Lewis, Upshur and Wetzel counties

Successful trading profits allowed him to eventually invest in property investments and opened up 2 stores; Shinnston and Pike Street

All their male children served in the US military

(Stenger,2002)



EL HAIJJ SALON & SPA

Susan Hage-Owner of El Haijj Salon
& Spa

Hage is an Arab American from
Columbus, OH. Opened El Haijj Salon
in Huntington, WV since 1998. The
name “Haijj” is based off her last
name and means pilgrimage in
Arabic. (Mullins,1998)



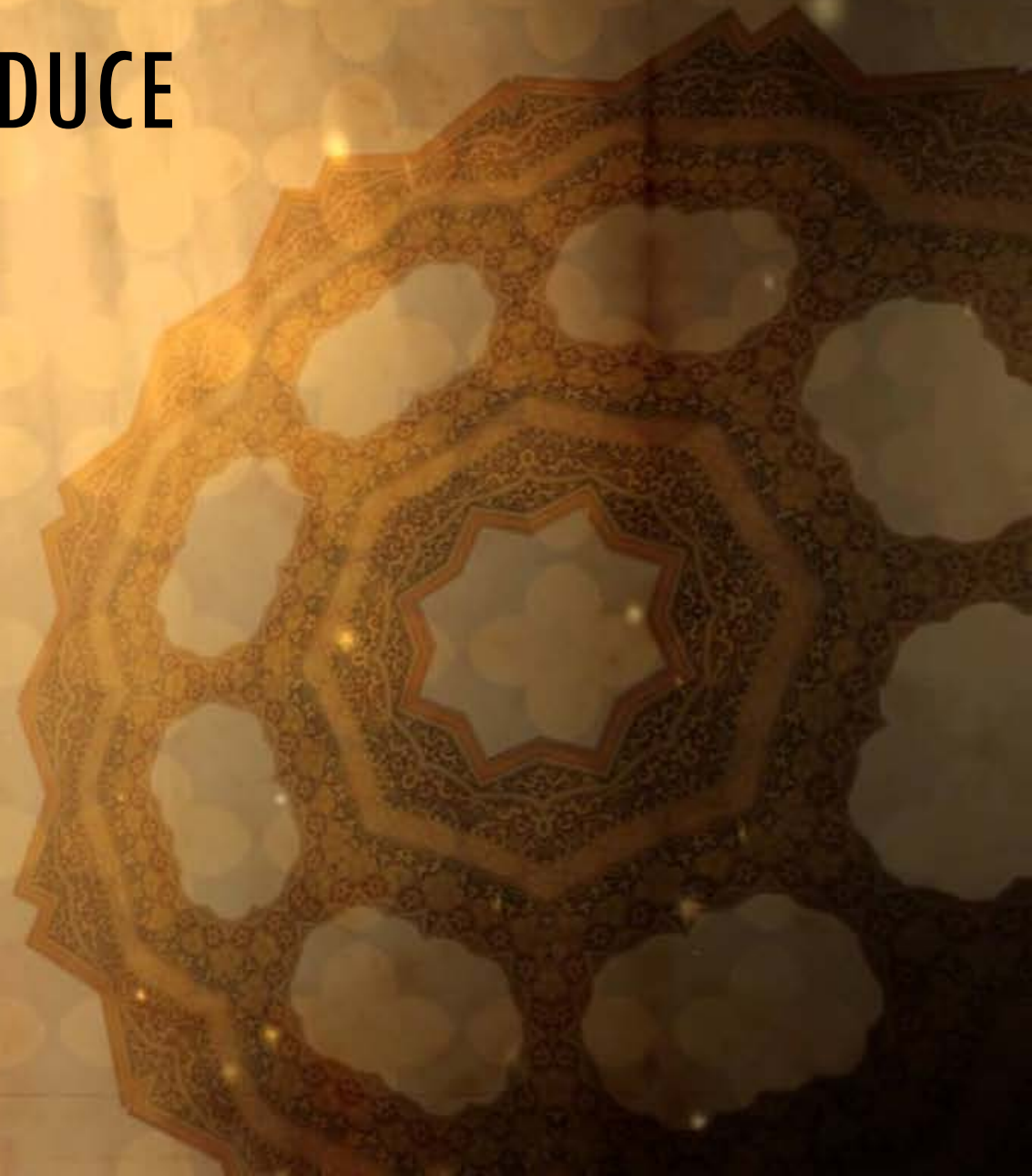
MIKE JACOBS WHOLESALE PRODUCE

Mike Jacobs-Owner of Mike Jacobs
Wholesale Produce

Jacobs is an Arab American with
Lebanese origins.

“Successful businessman awarded the
key to the city of Montgomery for
lifelong service to his community.”

(Jacobs, 1992)



NOUGAT CHOCOLATIER

Wafa Hamaty- Owner of Nougat Chocolatier

Moved to the United States in 1991 from Lebanon, and missed the sweet shops there. She opened her own in Charleston, WV, offering imported Lebanese chocolates and other high end chocolates.

(Orosz, 2012)



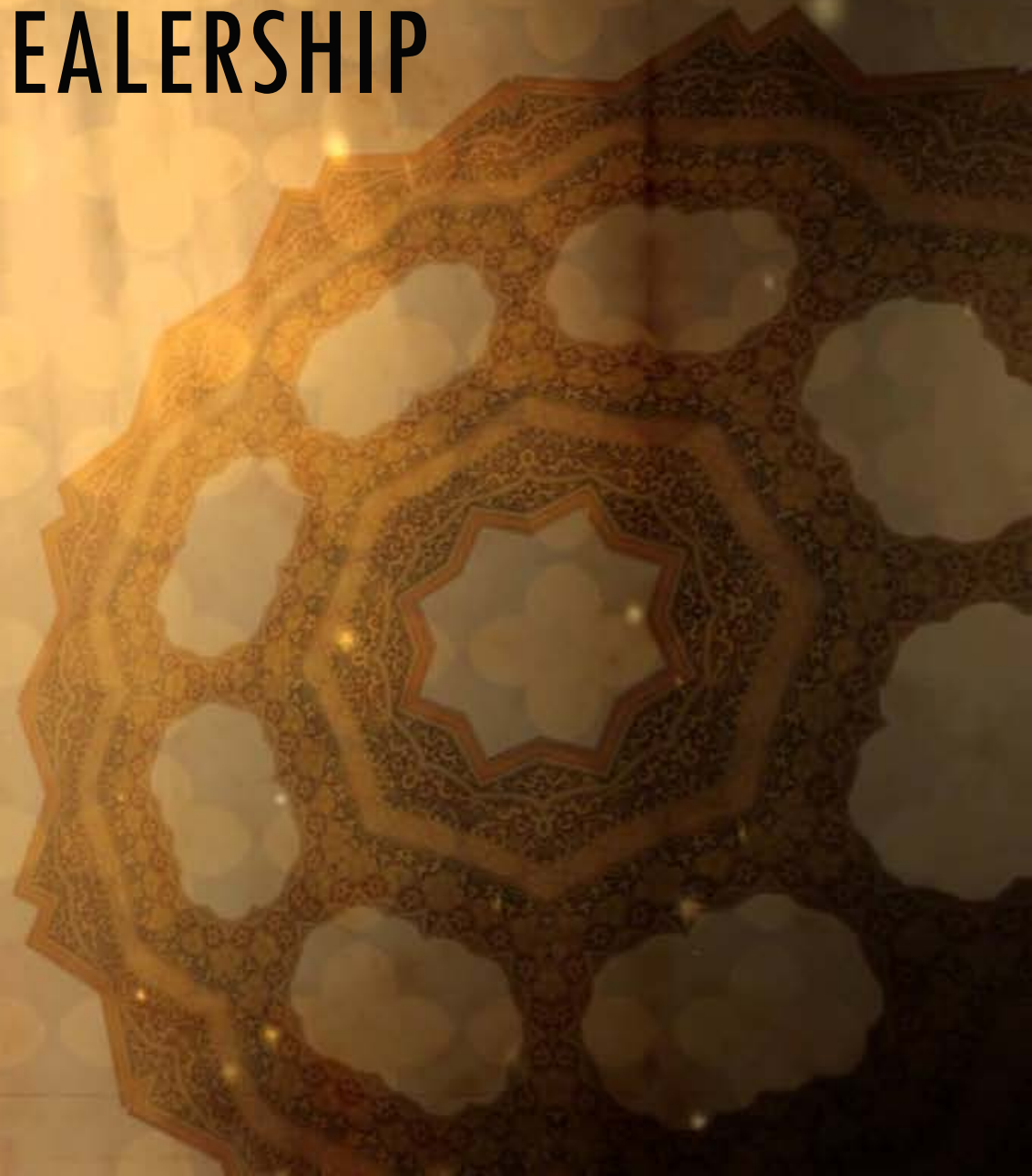
GENERAL STORE AND CAR DEALERSHIP

Frank Rushden-Owner

Owner of a general store at Switzer before joining the Navy during World War II. Then he opened a car dealership in Logan.

Arab American Muslim from Logan, WV with Syrian origins.

(Meador, 1994)



MANSOUR'S MARKET

Michael Mansour, worked for his father
then operated many successful businesses

Sold in 2001, but was the first to offer
delivery service and extended credit to
customers

(Welch, 2011)



SAADS ORIENTAL & PERSIAN RUGS

Julian Saad –Owner

Born in Lebanon and moved to the
United States in 1969

Previously an electrical engineer

(Chambers, 2011)



JULIAN'S MARKET GROCERY STORE

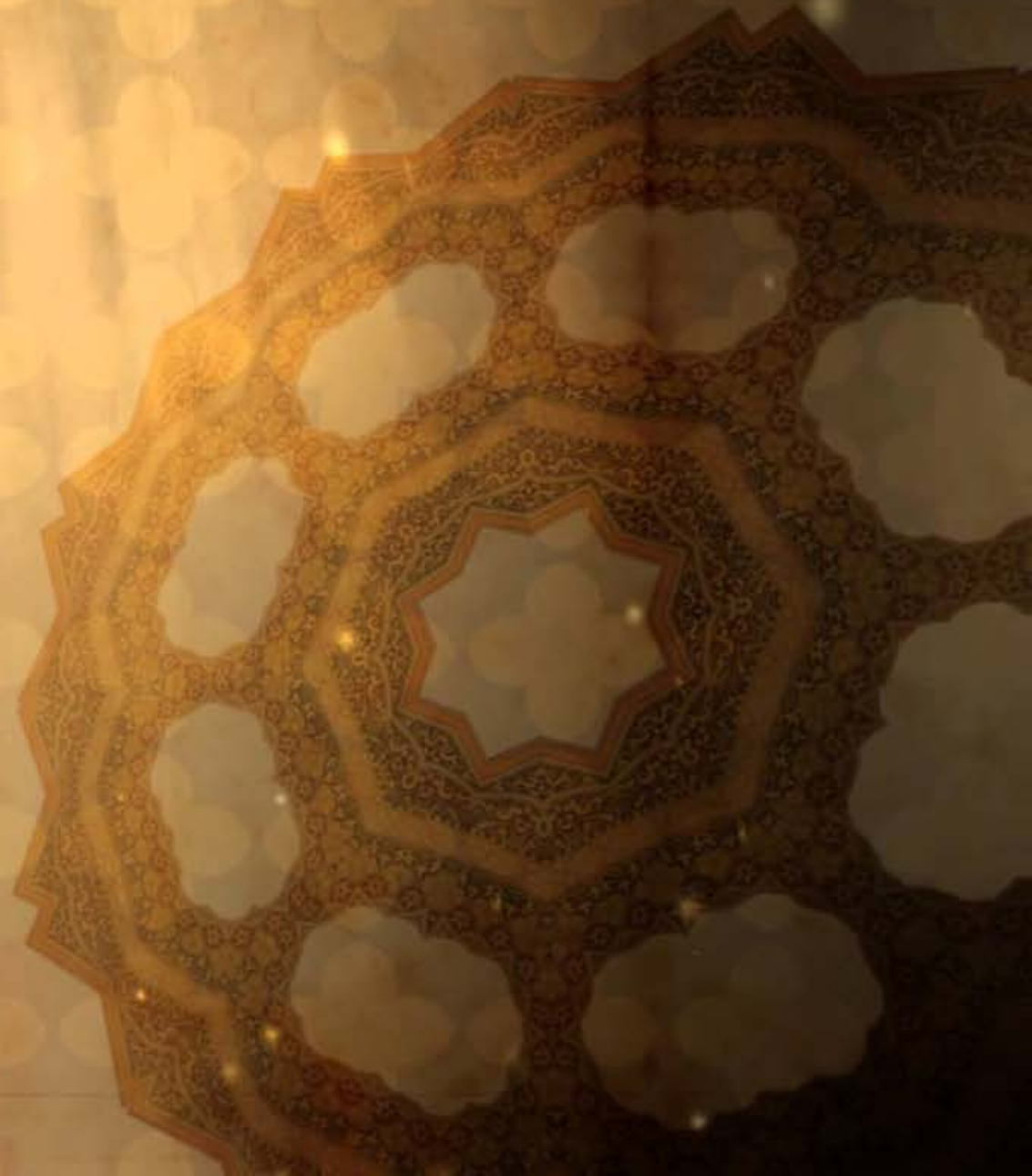
Julian Saad- Owner

Previously Mansour's Original Market,
bought in 2001

Lebanese roots

Competes with larger grocery chains by
cultivating personal relationships with
customers; he offers special services such
as telephone orders, delivering
groceries, and loading groceries into
customers' cars

(Chambers, 2011)



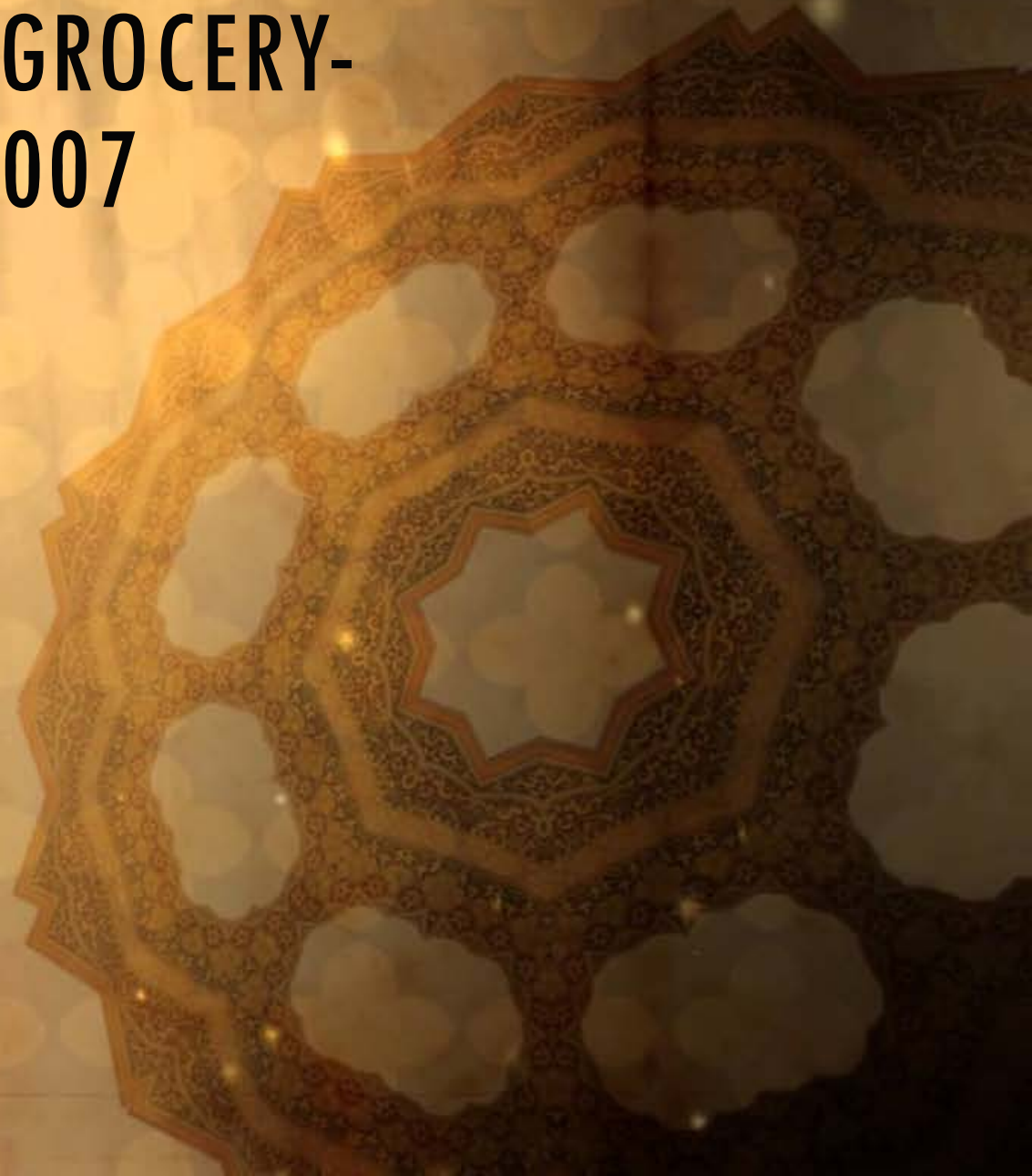
RESTAURANT & MIDDLE EAST GROCERY- INTERNATIONAL CAFÉ 1995-2007

Husna Al-Qawasmeh- Owner & Founder

Middle East Food & Grocery

First in town to serve unique and genuine
Middle Eastern food such as Humus,
Tabbouleh, Falafel, Shawarma, Gyros,
Kebbeh, Stuffed Grape Leaves, etc.

Closed due to owner illness



CEDAR MARKET AND CEDAR CAFÉ

SANDWICH SHOP CAFÉ AND & GROCERY

Foad Obeid- owner

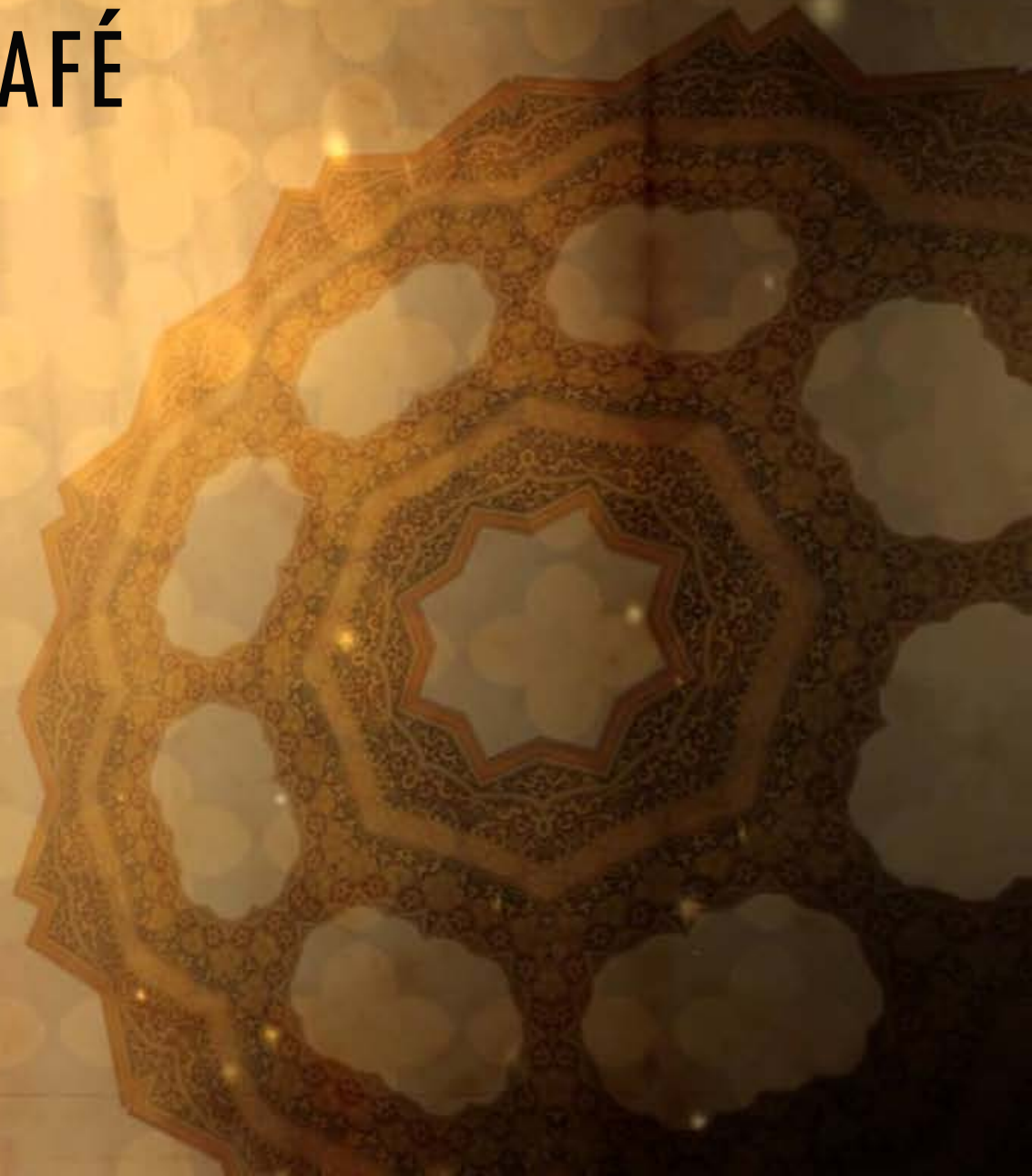
Samih Jammal- manager

Jammal graduated from Marshall University in 2003 with marketing degree

Selling a variety of Middle Eastern, Indian, and East Asian goods and serving Lebanese dishes

American Muslims with Lebanese roots

(Sebert, 2015)

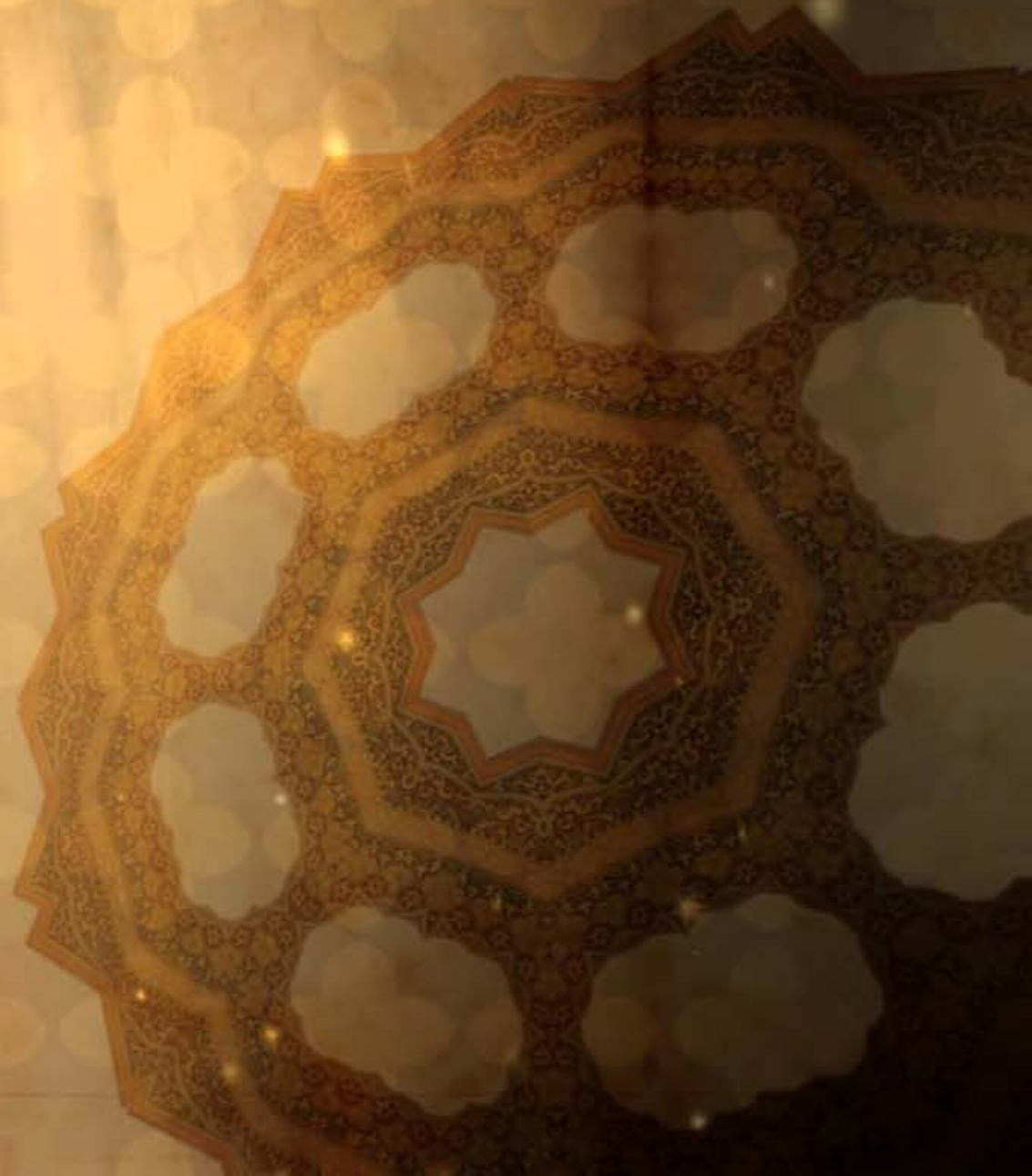


ENTREPRENEURS

Dr. Joseph Touma

Dr. Joseph Touma is one who has been instrumental in accomplishing the task of bringing life back to downtown, according to business owners and tenants of the buildings he has renovated. A prominent ear doctor in Huntington, Touma has renovated several buildings downtown and leased them to various businesses owners

<http://www.huntingtonquarterly.com/articles/issue71/third.php>



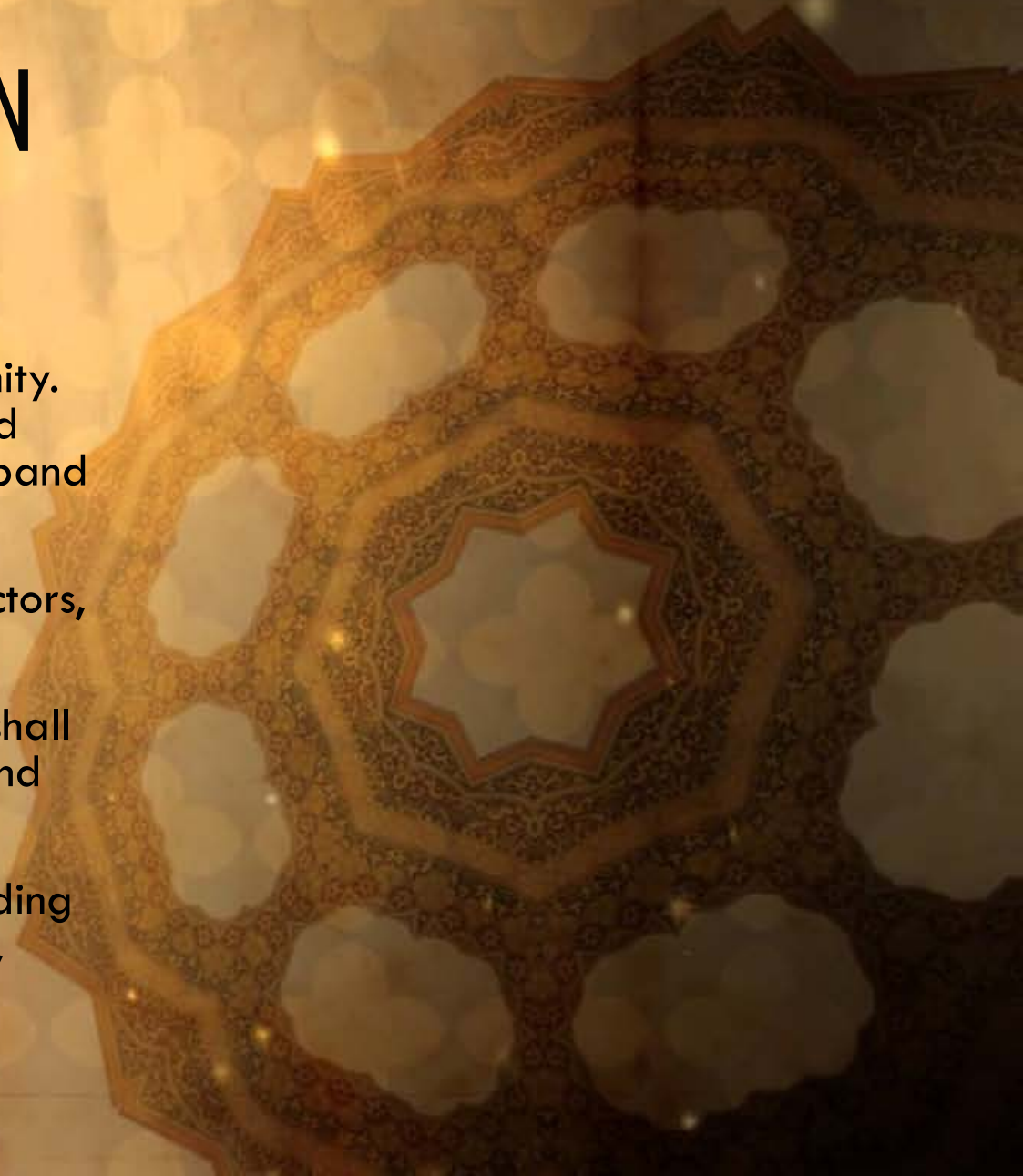
CONTRIBUTIONS-EDUCATION

Americans with Arab origins and of Muslim faith have contributed to the education of the West Virginia community. Through establishing important positions in Universities and hosting public discussions, they share common goals to expand public knowledge.

Hold various Academic titles including Faculty, Staff, Directors, Department Chair, and Deanship.

Taught at WV Higher Education Institutions including Marshall University, West Virginia University, Concord University, and WV State.

Teaching assignment covers wide variety of subjects including Science, Humanities & Social Sciences, Business, Education, Librarianship, & Medicine.



PROFESSOR, LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Majed Khader, Ph.D. in Library and Information Studies
Professor, Director of Morrow Library at Marshall University

Arab American Muslim, residing in Huntington, WV.

Since 1989, Khader held various leadership and committee appointments at the state (WVLA) library Association as well as at the American Library Associations (ALA). ALA is the largest and oldest world library association with over 58,000 members. Khader most recent ALA presidential committee appointments are Library Advocacy Committee and the Task Force on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Published several articles on Islam in The Herald-Dispatch and a few in Charleston Gazette, and The Parthenon (MU students newspaper).

Book Chapter titled *"Challenges and Obstacles in Palestinian Libraries (Published in Libraries in the Early 21st Century, an International Perspective Vol.2, 2012)*

Invited speaker on Arab Spring- Shanghai International University, Shanghai, China. The lecture was published at the conference proceedings and at the Journal of Middle Eastern Studies V.5 no. 4, 2011.

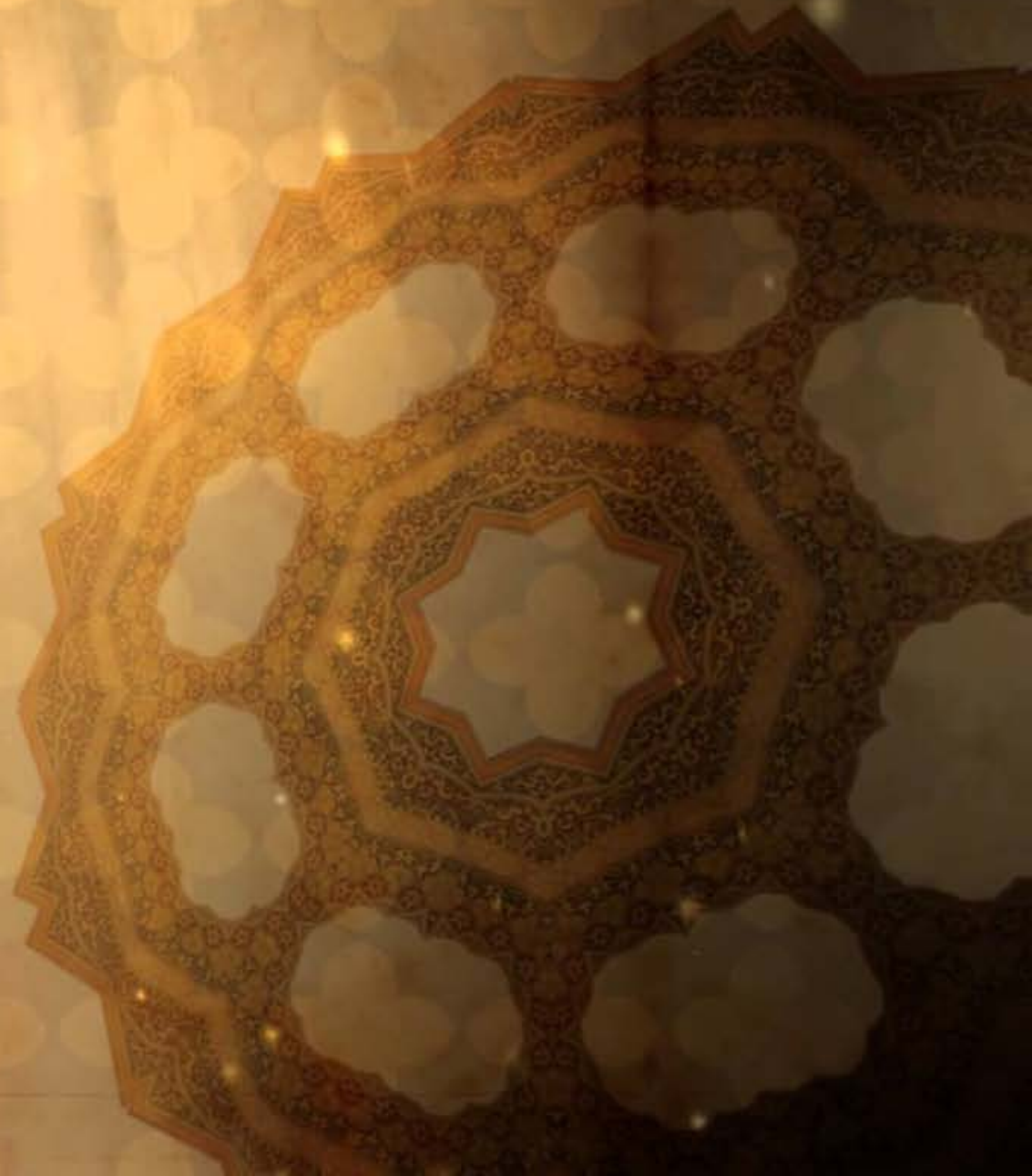
PROFESSOR AND DEAN

Dr. Wael Zatar- dean of Marshall University's College of Information Technology and Engineering

Chairman of National Committee on Structural Fiber Reinforced Polymers of the Transportation Research Board of the National Academics (first in the state of WV to serve in this role)

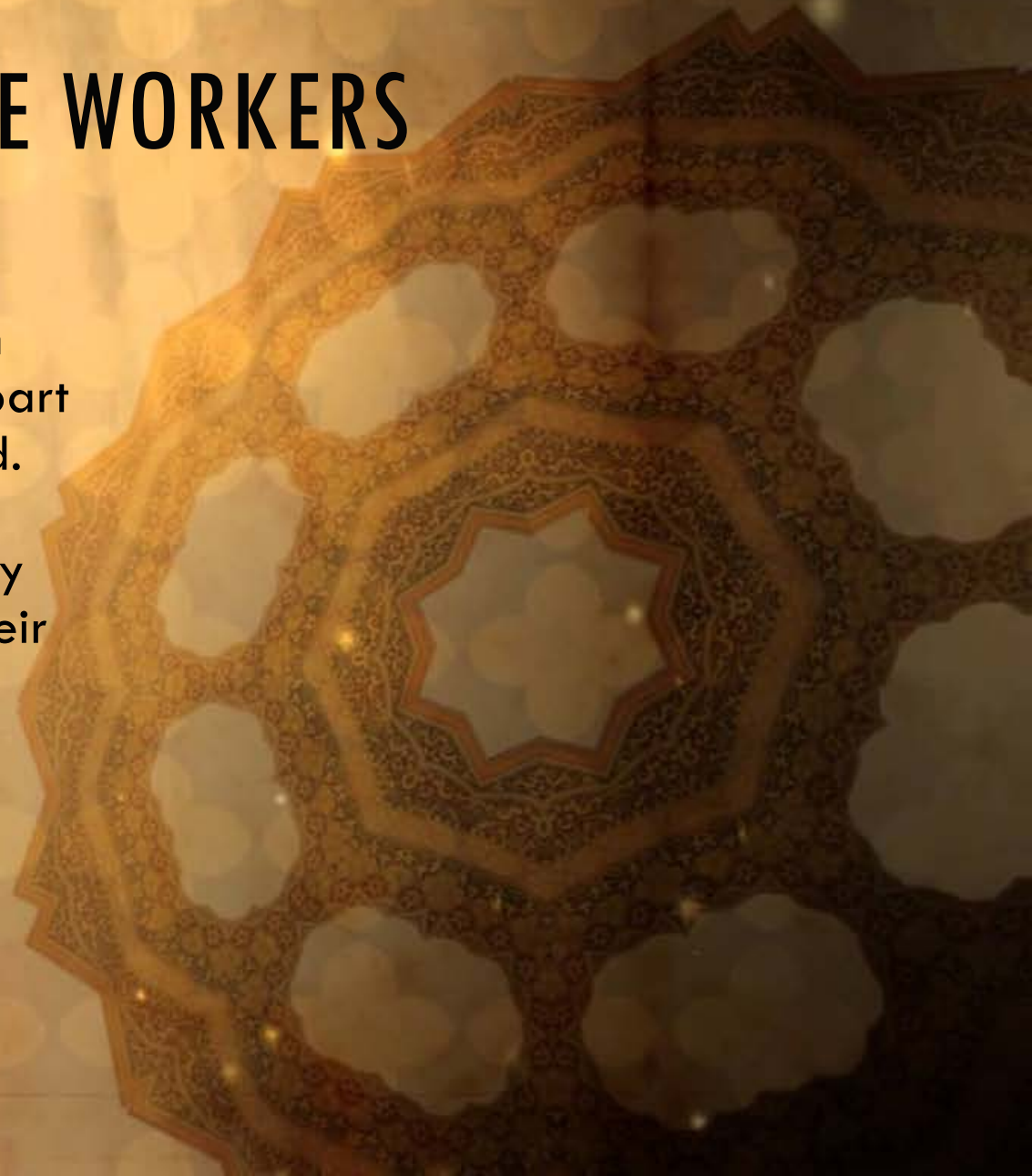
American Muslim with Egyptian roots

(Dispatch, 2015)



CONTRIBUTIONS-HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Arab & Muslim Americans contribution to the health system and individual health of the citizens in this part of the Appalachian region is very well documented. Doctors from various medical specialties hold respected positions as physicians in hospitals. Many others are also business owners who established their own medical practices.



HEALTHCARE WORKERS-CONTINUES

WV hospitals, Medical schools , and health clinic in WV and nearby the tristate area of WV, KY, & OH employs numerous doctors from Arabic and Islamic backgrounds. The next few slides reflects what just one institution, Marshall University (Marshall Health) record of employment of physicians from these two categories (Arab & Muslims) as well as some private practice doctors from Arabic or Islamic backgrounds.



MARSHALL HEALTH

As of 12/16/2016, the

Total number of “Marshall Health” doctors:
239

Total number of Arab/Muslim doctors: 35

Percentage of Arab and Muslim doctors:
14.6%

Percentage of Muslim doctors: 11.3%

Percentage of Arab non-Muslim doctors:
3.3%

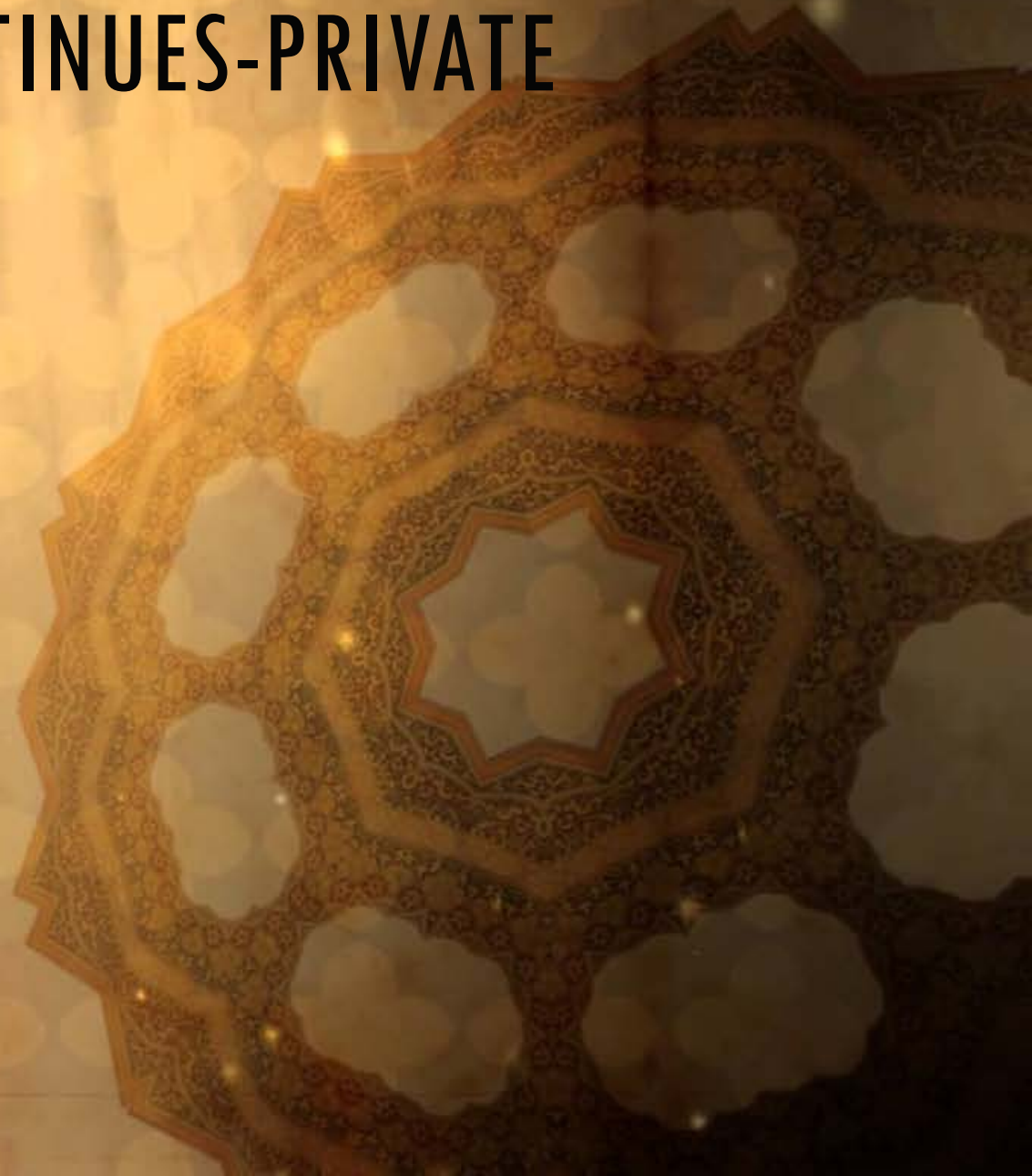
“Previous data Source is

<http://marshallhealth.org/doctors/find-a-doctor/?dept=12>”



HEALTH CARE WORKERS-CONTINUES-PRIVATE PRACTICE

The following few slides covers only a few specialties such as Ear Specialists, Cardiologists, Neurosurgeons, Orthodontists, etc.



EAR SPECIALIST

Dr. Joseph Touma- ear specialist, inventor, author, and entrepreneur

“Renowned physician, philanthropist and civic leader” (Hahn, 1999)

Went to Damascus University School of Medicine and started residency in Michigan in 1966. Moved to Huntington in 1971. (Hahn, 1999)

Touma Museum of Medicine and Touma Near Eastern Gallery (Hahn, 1999)

The Herald Dispatch Citizen of the Year award in 2000 and inducted into Marshall University’s Business Hall of Fame in 2001. (Stuck, 2001)



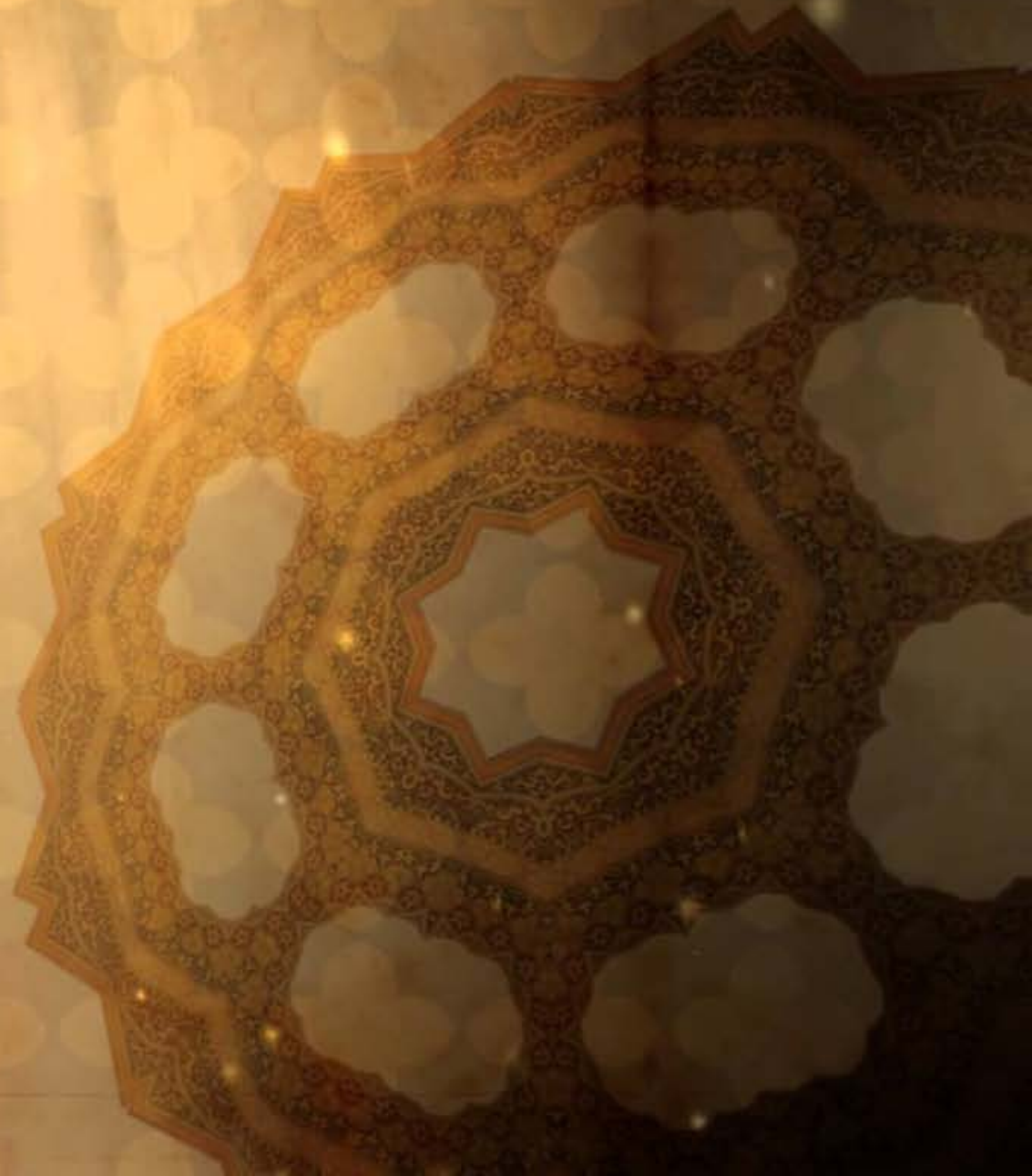
CARDIOLOGIST

Dr. Babar Yousef-cardiologist-Co-owner

Received a Distinguished West Virginian
Award from the governor and the Heart of
Gold Award from the American Heart
Association

Partnered practice with Indian cardiologist

(Calwell, 2013)



SPRINGHILL CARDIOLOGY CENTER PLLC

Dr. Badshah Wazir-founder of Springhill
Cardiology Center PLLC

“Dr. Badshah Jan Wazir, from Wana of
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in Pakistan,
has been a cardiologist in Charleston
since 1975.” (Yaqoob, 2013)



SHAMMA ORTHODONTICS

Dr. Imad Shamma- owner of Shamma Orthodontics

“Shammaa, whose orthodontics office is in Kanawha City, is a native of Syria and moved to the United States in 1989. He’s been in West Virginia since 1995.”(Kersey, 2015)



NEUROSURGEON

Dr. Rida Mazagri- Neurosurgeon formally at St. Mary's Regional Neuroscience Center, now is at Marshall

From Tripoli, Libya, Mazagri is an Arab Muslim American residing in Charleston, WV.

Introduces a “cutting-edge surgical treatment known as deep brain stimulation”

(Hendricks, 2008)



CONTRIBUTIONS-PUBLIC SERVICES

Americans with Arab origins have made valuable contributions to public service in West Virginia. They represent the same values and principles as their fellow West Virginians.



WEST VIRGINIA DELEGATE

West Virginia Delegate John Ellem

Ellem has served in the West Virginia House of Delegates representing the 10th district.

“John Ellem, who is Syrian and Lebanese, said his family celebrated 100 years in West Virginia in 2012.” (Beck, 2015)

“A Parkersburg attorney and former delegate, (Ellem) said his family came from a small Christian village north of Damascus.” (Beck, 2015)



WEST VIRGINIA DELEGATE

Doug Skaff Jr.-West Virginia Delegate

Managing Partner, Building and
Remodeling Warehouse;

Vice President, Skaff Development
Company;

Member, West Virginia House of
Delegates

(Tankersley, 2012)

Founder of WVU Mountaineer Maniacs



US CONGRESS

US Congressman Nick Rahall

“The country’s longest serving Arab-American congressman”

Held public office for 38 years

“My grandfathers immigrated to this country in the early 1900s from the hills of southern Lebanon to the hills of southern West Virginia,” Rahall said. “It’s the American dream come true.”

(Gutman, 2015)



MILITARY- NATIONAL GUARD

Major General Joseph Skaff

Adjutant General of WV and Head
of WV National Guard



MILITARY- NATIONAL GUARD

Raymond George- Lieutenant Colonel of WV
National Guard from Charleston, WV

First Generation Lebanese son of Helen
Tweel Kokair and Samuel George

Commissioned as second Lt. at Fort Benning,
GA, served at Fort Knox, KY and Camp
Aberdeen, MD

Served in Seoul, Korea during Korean
conflict

(WV Gazette, 2015)



CONTRIBUTIONS- SOCIAL & CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

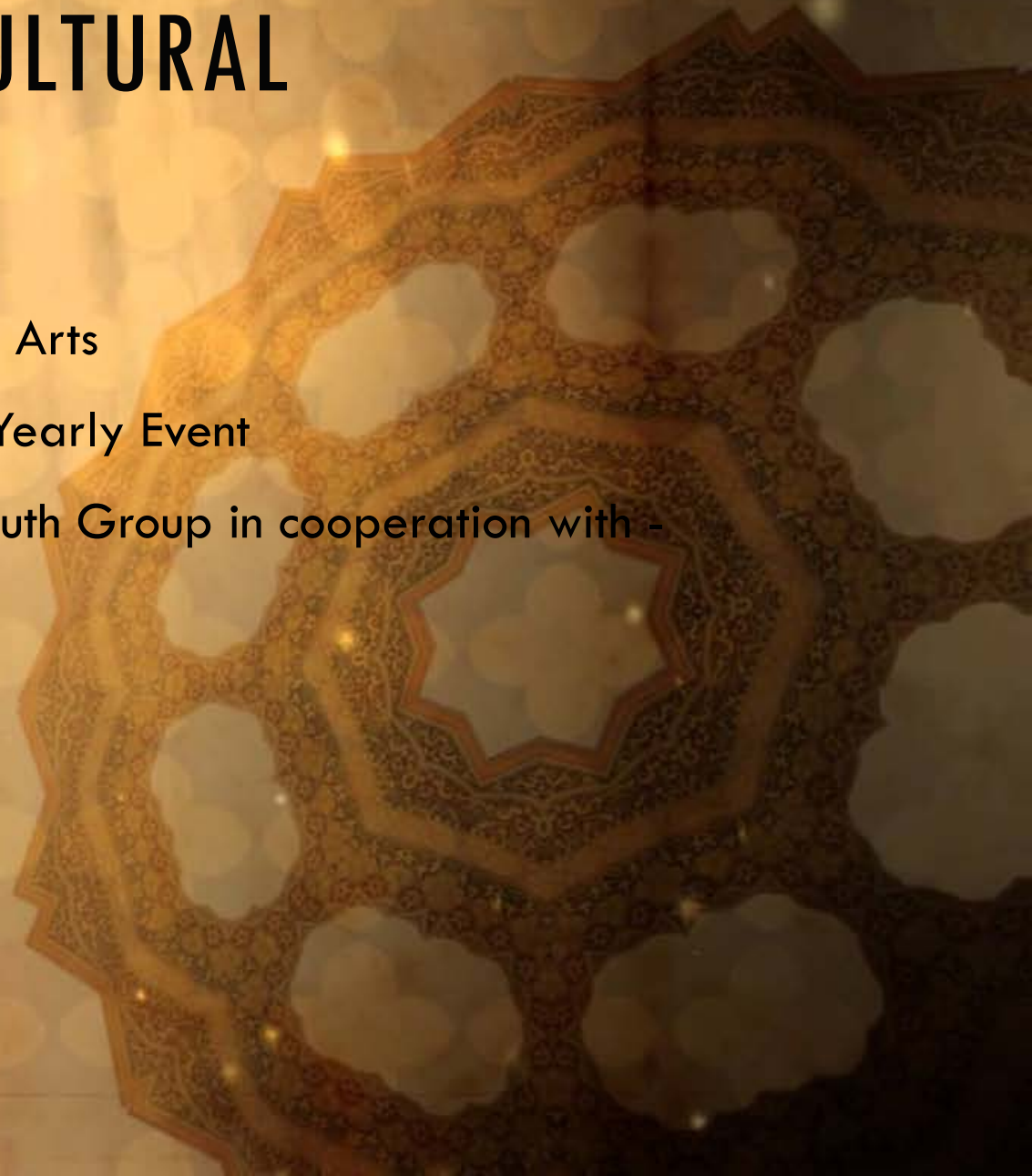
Hilltop Festival Participation-Huntington Museum of Arts

Middle East Dinner Holly Spirit Orthodox Church- Yearly Event

Feed the Homeless- Muslim Students Association Youth Group in cooperation with -
Cooperation with local Churches

Touma Medical Museum-Medical History-
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FB6JhzhLk1Y>

Touma Art Gallery



SOCIAL MEDIA-CAFÉ A LA FIKR

Ali Issa- President

Started as an idea in Charleston, WV by its founders Dr. Saud Ashraf and Ammar Elmehmi in February 2004.

November, 2011, a meeting was held to revive Café a la Fikr by one of the founding members.

Café a la Fikr continues to evolve and seeks community development cross-culturally through social interaction and discourse based on principles of leadership and common humanity, while remaining rooted to the Islamic ethos.

. Café a la Fikr has instigated discussion between faiths in West Virginia and built bridges between communities with educational interfaith dialogues.

“Goals of fostering a greater cultural understanding through social interaction and education”

\$5,000 donation to University of Charleston in 2013 from Café a la Fikr

(Molenda, 2013)

<http://www.cafealafikr.com/>



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Marshall University for giving me the opportunity to conduct this research. I was awarded sabbatical leave and mini grant during Fall 2015 semester to work on this research project





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